

belonging to a species selected from *Streptococcus thermophilus* and *Lactobacillus bulgaricus*, wherein said strain modifies bile acid metabolism.

²
~~38~~. (Amended) The biologically pure strain of Claim ~~37~~¹, wherein the bacteria strain is *Streptococcus thermophilus* YS 52, deposited with the CNCM, Collection Nationale de Cultures de Microorganismes, Institut [Pasterur] Pasteur, under the accession number I-1670.

³
~~39~~. (Amended) The biologically pure strain of Claim ~~37~~¹, wherein the bacteria strain is *Streptococcus thermophilus* YS 46, deposited with the CNCM, Collection Nationale de Cultures de Microorganismes, Institut [Pasterur] Pasteur, under the accession number I-1668.

⁴
~~40~~. (Amended) The biologically pure strain of Claim ~~37~~¹, wherein the bacteria strain is *Streptococcus thermophilus* YS 48, deposited with the CNCM, Collection Nationale de Cultures de Microorganismes, Institut [Pasterur] Pasteur, under the accession number I-1669.

⁵
~~41~~. (Amended) The biologically pure strain of Claim ~~37~~¹, wherein the bacteria strain is *Lactobacillus bulgaricus* LB 1 deposited with the CNCM, Collection Nationale de Cultures de Microorganismes, Institut [Pasterur] Pasteur, under the accession number I-1664.

⁶
~~42~~. (Amended) The biologically pure strain of Claim ~~37~~¹, wherein the bacteria strain is *Lactobacillus bulgaricus* LB 3 deposited with the CNCM, Collection Nationale de Cultures de Microorganismes, Institut [Pasterur] Pasteur, under the accession number I-1665.

⁷
~~43~~. (Amended) The biologically pure strain of Claim ~~37~~¹, wherein the bacteria strain is *Lactobacillus bulgaricus* LB 7 deposited with the CNCM, Collection Nationale de Cultures de Microorganismes, Institut [Pasterur] Pasteur, under the accession number I-1666.

⁸
~~44~~. (Amended) The biologically pure strain of Claim ~~37~~¹, wherein the bacteria strain is *Lactobacillus bulgaricus* LB 77 deposited with the CNCM, Collection Nationale de Cultures de Microorganismes, Institut [Pasterur] Pasteur, under the accession number I-1667.--

Please add the following new claims:

~~45~~. The biologically pure strain of Claim ~~37~~, wherein the bacteria strain has a 7 α -dehydroxylase activity of less than 25%.

~~46~~. The biologically pure strain of Claim ~~37~~, wherein the bacteria strain has a bile acid deconjugation activity of less than 25%.

~~47~~. The biologically pure strain of Claim ~~37~~, wherein the bacteria strain has a 7 α -dehydroxylase activity of less than 25% and a bile acid deconjugation activity of less than 50%.--

SUPPORT FOR THE AMENDMENTS

Applicants have amended Claims 37-44, to recite "biologically pure" as suggested by the Examiner on page 2 of the Official Action and to correct the spelling of Pasteur. Support for this amendment can be found on pages 21 and 22 of the specification where it is disclosed that cultures of the claimed strains were deposited with CNCM, Collection Nationale de Cultures de Microorganismes, Institut Pasteur. Applicants have also amended Claim 37 to recite "wherein said strain modifies bile acid metabolism." Support for this amendment can be found on page 6, lines 8-17, of the specification. Applicants have also added new Claims 45-47. Support for Claims 45-47 can be found on pages 8 and 9, of the specification.

No new matter has been added. Claims 37-47 are active in this application.

REMARKS

At the outset, Applicants and Applicants' representative wish to thank Examiner Minnifield for the helpful and courteous discussion held with her on August 21, 2000, during which the prosecution of the above-identified application was materially advanced. The following remarks will expand and summarize the issues discussed,